

To whom it may concern:

Please support and pass HB 6105!

On February 7th I will be 39 years old, and one of the youngest adult adoptees affected by HB 6105. I'm almost 40 and still have to write "unknown" on forms asking for medical history; that one-word answer could mean that my doctor might miss out on a chance to order specific tests or prescribe specific medications and in essence might prevent him or her from being able to render the most effective care.

It is upsetting to think that legislation based on social stigma from decades ago is the deciding factor for my rights to biological and medical information. As a clinical social worker, I am intimately familiar with the damage that stigma and shame can cause. Opponents of bills similar to HB 6105 raised in prior legislative sessions have cited the importance of keeping the promises of confidentiality made to birth mothers prior to 1983. At that time, being an unwed or single mother was seen as shameful and holding fast to the need to honor those agreements implicitly supports the stigma.

In my opinion, my birth mother acted honorably by choosing to put me up for adoption, despite what society may have said. My parents did not hide the fact that I was adopted from me as they believed that making it a "family secret" would cause harm rather than averting it. In my work as a therapist I see all too often how harmful keeping family secrets can be. By passing HB 6105 and allowing all adult adoptees access to original birth certificates, legislature will reflect an attitude of healing and honesty that has been afforded to all other adult adoptees in the state. Please include us in the rule rather than keeping us as an exception.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Adams, LCSW